

Florin Japanese American Citizens League
Oral History Project

Oral History Interview

with

VIVIAN KARA

November 5, 1991
Sacramento, California

By Marion Kanemoto
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JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE

FLORIN CHAPTER •

• SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95828

PREFACE

In the summer of 1987, a small group of people from the Florin JACL met at Mary and Al Tsukamoto's home to plan a new project for the organization. Because of the unique history of Florin, we felt that there were special stories that needed to be preserved. The town of Florin, California was once a thriving farming community with a large Japanese American population. The World War II internment of persons of Japanese ancestry living on the west coast devastated the town and it never recovered. Today there is no town of Florin; it has been merged into the larger county of Sacramento. Japanese Americans who reside throughout the United States, however, have their origins from Florin or have relatives and friends who have ties to this community. The town may no longer exist, but the community continues to survive in people's hearts and memories.

Many hours have been devoted to interviewing former Florin residents. The focus of the interviews was on the forced internment and life in relocation camps, but our questions touched on other issues. We asked about their immigration to the United States from Japan, pre-war experiences, resettlement after the war and personal philosophies. We also wanted to record the stories of the people left behind; they were friends and neighbors who watched in anguish as the trains transported the community away.

We have conducted these interviews with feelings of urgency. If we are to come away with lessons from this historic tragedy, we must listen to and become acquainted with the people who were there. Many of these historians are in their seventies, eighties and nineties. We are grateful that they were willing to share their experiences and to answer our questions with openness and thoughtfulness.

We owe special thanks to James F. Carlson, former Assistant Dean of American River College and to Jacqueline S. Reinier, Director of the Oral History Program at California State University, Sacramento. Without their enthusiasm, encouragement and expertise, we never could have produced this collection of oral histories. We also want to acknowledge the project volunteers, the Florin JACL which contributed financial support, and Sumitomo Bank for their corporate donation.

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INTERVIEW HISTORY

INTERVIEWER

Marion Kanemoto, retired school nurse and member of the Florin Japanese American Citizens League

INTERVIEW TIME AND PLACE

November 5, 1991
Home of Vivian Venn Kara
7219 Hedge Avenue
Sacramento, California 95829

TRANSCRIBING AND TYPING

Transcribing and typing was done by Joanne Iritani, a retired school teacher and member of the Florin Japanese American Citizens League. The edited text was corrected by Vivian and Marion on February 1994. Vivian wrote her own biographical summary. As this itself contained more historical information, this was used.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Dan Inouye, member of Florin JACL reproduced the pictures.

EDITING

Final editing was done by Elizabeth Pinkerton, Director of State and Federal programs, Elk Grove Unified School District, and member of Florin JACL.

TAPES AND INTERVIEW RECORDS

Copies of bound transcript and the tape will be held by Florin Japanese American Citizens League and in the University Archives at the Library, California State University, Sacramento, 6000 J Street, Sacramento, California 95819.

BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY

by VIVIAN VENN KARA

I am a GENUINE native of FLORIN, being born on my FAMILY RANCH on Gerber Road, Florin, Sacramento County, California, May 31, 1913--now 80 YEARS OLD.

This is a story of some of my life with my family in the town of Florin when it was a little town.

I have an old property deed dated back to February 1884 when Robert Pritchard purchased and lived on what is known now as Pritchard Road. He was married to my Great Grandmother, Mary Jehu Watkins Pritchard, my Dad's Grandmother.

My father, was born in Plymouth, California, and when he was a youngster, they moved to Florin. He worked and was Superintendent of a mine in the little town of Tesla, located between Tracy and Livermore in the hills.

My Dad (Thomas Watkins Venn) met my Mother (Sophie Bruns Venn) from Livermore, married 1905. Born to them was my brother Thomas Venn, Jr. and me.

Florin was a very nice town in those days. When people came from Sacramento for a visit, they had to stay all night because it was too far to go and come in the same day.

Florin was a thriving community surrounded by farm land with the principal crops of grapes and strawberries.

I grew up on the ranch on Gerber Road. This is a list of some of the Japanese who lived around us and some I went to school with: Tsukamoto, Hirahata, Yamada, Tanaka, Tsuda, Noda, Fukushima, Nakashima, Yasui, Kiino, Dakuzaku, Shiohama, Takahashi, Kurima, Miyao, Nobuso, Okamoto, Inouye, Oda, Matsumoto, Ouchida, and Uchida.

I married Jerome J. (Jerry) Kara, August 16, 1936, and to us were born Diana Kara (Walter) Strickland and Judette Kara (Glenn) Rippetoe. Born to Diana were Karan K. Strickland (James) Jepsen II, Jerry J. Strickland, and Walter L. Strickland, my grandchildren, and my Great Grandchildren James III, Melissa, and Charles. They are the seventh generation to live in Florin.

Born to Judette were Lori V. Stewart and Gina L. (Thomas) Land, and Gina's son Mathew, my Great Grandson.

All my family attended school in Florin--Aunts, Uncle, Children Grandchildren, and now Great Grandchildren are attending Elk Grove High School. My uncle graduated from Elk Grove High School in 1913 and was the first one to receive the Oratorical Award Cup from the Native Sons, and when I was in Elk Grove High School, I won many trophies in Typing Contests.

Jerry Kara's family, John and Josephine (Vokac) Kara, moved with their family to Florin in 1911. John Kara worked for the Electric Company and was instrumental, with his wagon and horse,

moving poles, etc. along Florin Road, the start of electricity in the Florin area.

I attended Florin East School, which the previous generation of relatives had attended. While attending the east school, the upper grades moved to the Florin Community Hall, adjoining to the Florin Church, until the new brick school west was completed and I graduated from the new brick school west, and graduated from Elk Grove High School and College.

I married Jerry Kara in the Church in Florin, known now as Florin United Methodist Church, located on Palmer House Drive, which I have attended since I was about 2 weeks old and still attend. First part of our married life, we farmed. Then we built the General Merchandise Store in Florin known as "KARA'S DRIVE IN" and subdivided the property across from the store known as "KARA TRACT", bringing into the community several firsts, namely: regular service station (Kara Drive), all others were in conjunction with a garage; first bank, Bank of America, erected a portable building and leased the property, (later moved to corner of Florin Road & Stockton Blvd.), and a speedy eating place, the "Drive In". We negotiated with the government when it became necessary to enlarge the Florin Post Office and it was erected on the property adjoining the subdivision and a large market was built west of the post office, making our property from Kara Drive to Power Inn Road, a shopping area. My husband was Fire Commissioner, Trustee for the Florin School, and at the time of his

death, belonged to the Florin Odd Fellows, over forty years. I was very active in community affairs, belonged to the Florin Improvement Club, helped to bring the gas lines and having street lights in the community. I worked for the Federal Government and later worked with my husband ranching. Then we moved to the store and after selling the store, the last 15 years, I worked as Building Manager for the Odd Fellows Temple Association, the beautiful historical building located on 9th & K Streets, in Sacramento, which was recently sold to private owners.

My family have always been active in Fraternal and Civic activities. I belong to Florin Rebekah Lodge #20, of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, the largest Fraternal Order, under one head, in the world, was State President for the Rebekah Assembly of California, of which I was instrumental in building a Chapel at the Youth Camp above Sonora. This Chapel has a part of Florin in it as the Podium used in the Florin Community Methodist Church is a part of this Chapel that my husband and I were married in front of, also Marshal for the International Association of Rebekah Assemblies of the World and during that year had the privilege of being asked to place a wreath on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, in Washington D.C., and other Degrees of the Rebekahs and Odd Fellows, Elk Grove Order of Eastern Star #109, Noveta Council #151, Degree of Pocohontas, Liberty Parlor Native Daughters #213, received the Decoration Chivalry, PTA Life Membership, Florin Historical Society, and worked

with Jobs Daughters, Girl Scouts, Brownies, Church Youth Groups when daughters were young. I have been so happy and proud to have been born in FLORIN. I could write much history of the happenings in the community. When I was small, all the Fruit Companies Buildings were on the East side of the tracks and then they built new buildings and relocated on the West side. There were many houses on the East side, known as the "Section Gang Houses", the employees that maintained the railroad tracks from Sacramento, on, where Lumberjack is presently located. I have been a strong booster for our Town, always made it known, no matter where I was, that I lived in "FLORIN" and not Sacramento.

[Begin Tape 1, Side 1]

KANEMOTO: This is the oral history of Vivian Kara on November 5, 1991. She recently moved to 7219 Hedge Avenue and has a great, huge cottage full of antiques and a lot of California history. Her birthday is May 31, 1913, making her seventy eight years old. As you will find out, she is very "sharp." They are in their seventh. Vivian Kara'a name is spelled V-I-V-I-A-N K-A-R-A. The interviewer is Marion Kanemoto. M-A-R-I-O-N K-A-N-E-M-O-T-O.

Okay, Vivian, if we may go all the way back to your background, your childhood. Can you tell us your situation then? Starting with your parents' names. We'd like to see at what status you were. Were you comfortable, well-to-do, or having difficult times? Can you create a picture for us?

KARA: Well, I think everybody has to start out. We were farmers. That's the way everybody made their living. We had grape vineyards, then we went into the dairy business and had chickens, too. And things like that.

KANEMOTO: So when did your family, the V-E-N-N family come to the Florin area?

KARA: My dad came in the 1800's and bought the property.

KANEMOTO: From where?

KARA: At that time, he was in a little town that doesn't exist anymore, Tesla. That was between Livermore and Tracy, in the hills there. So that's where he met my mother in Livermore. She was reared in Livermore. Then they moved up here. They lived in town in Sacramento for a short time, and then they moved out on the ranch. I had a brother who was seven years older, and I was born on Gerber Road. I don't know, but through all the depression years, I think people were happier when they didn't have anything. I think they had a happier life than people nowadays because everybody was interested. . .with all this robbing and killing that's going on now. We had a happy life. we didn't have to lock our doors.

KANEMOTO: That's right. So the primary business was vineyards then?

KARA: Yes. They built the winery. Then I worked up there during the winery harvest season, and in the big sheds during harvest season with the grapes, and worked at home, too.

KANEMOTO: In those days did your mother work in the vineyards, also?

KARA: Yes, we all did.

KANEMOTO: What was her maiden name? Your mother's maiden name.

KARA: Bruns. B-R-U-N-S.

KANEMOTO: B-R-U-N-S. And on your father's side?

KARA: My father's side then, his family moved next door to us.

So my grandmother lived not too far from me, and my uncles and aunts.

KANEMOTO: Your father and they worked together. So his name was V-E-N-N.

KARA: No, his mother's name was. . . she was just remarried, her name was Rowland. R-O-W-L-A-N-D.

KANEMOTO: You had how many brothers and sisters?

KARA: Just one brother.

KANEMOTO: And he is not living at this time?

KARA: No.

KANEMOTO: Then you are the only survivor.

KARA: He died in the fifties. He was killed six weeks after my father died.

KANEMOTO: Oh, how tragic.

KARA: It was tragic because Judette was born the day before. . . My father passed away, she was born the next day, and then six weeks later my brother was killed.

KANEMOTO: Oh, that was tragic.

KARA: Everybody in our family attended the Florin schools. Down the great grandchildren, there are seven generations.

KANEMOTO: Now when you say Florin schools is that the current Florin schools?

KARA: Yes. My brother started when the old school was down at McComber Street. Back, set back. And then I started with the, I don't know what they use it for now, the school that's close to the road on the east side of the tracks. . .

KANEMOTO: That's the Kara Preschool.

KARA: Yes. I started in the first grade there. Then when I was in the fifth grade, we went to the Community Hall. That's when they segregated the school, and then they built the big school and I graduated from the big school. Later on they built the other school down Kara.

KANEMOTO: Your husband, was he . . . ?

KARA: He went to the Enterprise School here. He used to deliver The Sacramento Bee newspaper. He went to Elk Grove High School. He graduated the year I started there. In a small town you knew everybody. I knew him for a long time. All his family went there.

KANEMOTO: So where did his folks come from?

KARA: They came from Chicago originally.

KANEMOTO: Presently, you're the seventh generation? Or is it your great grandchildren?

KARA: The great grandchildren.

KANEMOTO: That makes the seventh generation.

KARA: They didn't just come in to visit. They lived here. Seven generations.

KANEMOTO: I noticed that. How did you acquire all this land that bears the Kara name?

KARA: Oh, you mean the subdivision? Well, it was during the depression, and I think we paid fifteen dollars a month on it until we got it paid off. Because they foreclosed on the acreage up there during the depression. No one could

pay things. So I worked and my husband worked and we paid fifteen dollars a month for the property, and kept on until we finally got it. We never got any of these high prices they're getting now. We didn't have any property when all these prices came in.

KANEMOTO: What kind of class did you grow up in? Did you have some Japanese students in the class as classmates?

KARA: Oh, yes. We all started to school together.

KANEMOTO: Do you remember some names?

KARA: Al Tsukamoto was one. Mary was younger. Her sister Ruth was in the same class with me. Hugh Kiino was in the same class. He married Ruth Dakuzaku. Bill Okamoto. Oh, I don't know all the different ones I went to school with.

KANEMOTO: Did you see any tension between the. . .

KARA: Oh, no. We never had any tension between. And I would say it was just remarkable. No one ever intermarried or anything and yet we were close friends. But there was no intermarriage. Intermarriage was when they had the war and the service men brought them back from some other place. Here in Florin we were close friends and all neighbors. Nishi was one of our neighbors, and Hirohatas was one of our neighbors. The Hirohata family, I think that nine people are doctors out of that family. John and Frank and Paul were in school with me. Their ranch bordered ours.

KANEMOTO: That's Hirohata?

KARA: Hirohata, yes.

KANEMOTO: Did they seem like outstanding students?

KARA: Yes. They had children. They had nine doctors John told me out of his family. I have always gone to Doctor Ito and Doctor Mitoma. He just retired, on Freeport.

KANEMOTO: Fujimoto?

KARA: No. I just saw him the other night at the funeral.

KANEMOTO: Mike Umeda?

KARA: Yes. Mike Umeda. I went to Henry Taketa's funeral the other night.

KANEMOTO: You knew them also. They were from the Florin area, weren't they?

KARA: We'd always been close.

KANEMOTO: And your husband also knew the same group.

KARA: Yes, because he went to school with the Tsudas here at Enterprise. They lived down past the edge of the road, real close there. Jerry and I both tutored. One was Seichi, and the other was the youngest. They both passed away. The older brother is still living. The Taketa family was a great family.

KANEMOTO: So you were involved during that segregated period when the Japanese kids had to go to a Japanese American school and the white kids went to another school?

KARA: That was just a short time though.

KANEMOTO: What did you think about it.

KARA: It didn't make any difference. We were friends. It didn't make any difference. We saw each other. It was a short

time. I really considered that I had a lot of friends among the Japanese. And my dad, too. They liked my dad. He was always trying to help them.

KANEMOTO: What kind of business did your father have.

KARA: Farming. He had the Florin Fruitgrower's Association. He was one of the directors. When they evacuated, my dad was the overseer of their farms, and we would go out to make sure it was taken care of and everything. And Jerry did the same thing, too.

KANEMOTO: That's why you have definitely a tie. You couldn't avoid them because they were also out there farming and they had to bring it in.

I guess we can move on into the World War II period. We all were faced by surprise of the Pearl Harbor days. How did you feel? Did you feel the Japanese here had anything to do with it at all?

KARA: Not necessarily, because I knew they were friends. I know there was some things going on with some of them, a couple of them. It didn't make any difference in my life. I helped them when they had to catch the train. When they had to go off, I took a lot of them to the train. The Yamadas had a daughter who had TB or something and was sick. And so they'd allow them to come once in a while to visit her and they'd always come and stay. I hope we're never going to see that again.

KANEMOTO: It was kind of strange, it happened so suddenly. It was

a panic situation, wasn't it? I know the Japanese had very few days to really get ready, and pack, and take care of their business and their personal lives. I understand you oversaw several farms. Do you remember the Japanese names?

KARA: We had the Yamadas and we had the Tanakas. They were right by the railroad tracks on Gerber Road.

KANEMOTO: The Nambas maybe?

KARA: The Tamaharas lived in that tract.

KANEMOTO: Tamaharas?

KARA: Yes. I can't even think of their names. We took care of their ranch.

KANEMOTO: It must have been an enormous amount of responsibility. Your husband didn't have to go into the service then.

KARA: He wasn't in the age bracket.

KANEMOTO: So with the gasoline shortage and everything, to oversee all this, it must have been. . .

KARA: To keep it up and keep it nice for them, which we did.

KANEMOTO: Most were gone three or four years, weren't they?

KARA: Four years.

KANEMOTO: Because that was about the time they started coming back. They were allowed to go inward, but not to the west coast. I had heard of appreciation for what you and your husband had done. . .

KARA: And my dad, too.

KANEMOTO: And your dad, too. Did you ever visit the camps at all?

You never did. But you had some communication going by letter?.

KARA: Yes. I used to have their letters, but I don't know what ever happened to them.

KANEMOTO: You still have several things at your other house. Maybe we can talk about your church. Was your church integrated? It was the Methodist Church in Florin.

KARA: The Japanese Church was across the street and what's the other one?

KANEMOTO: The Buddhist Church?

KARA: Yes, the Buddhist Church. That's why I say, we were all friends, but we didn't intermingle. And when they came back, one minister thought they should all be combined, so that's what happened.

KANEMOTO: Without any problem.

KARA: Yes, we didn't have any problem.

KANEMOTO: That's a wonderful. . . It can be done.

KARA: Sure it can. They had a church conference, too. Then they had a Japanese school, too, learning English over by the Buddhist Hall church.

KANEMOTO: I think as far as the Christian Church, it probably was because of the language barrier. Due to the first generation parents, they had to have a minister from Japan or somebody who was strongly bilingual.

KARA: Yes, they had Japanese ministers. I knew them all. They

were all good men. Jack Akiharas, too. They were real good.

KANEMOTO: What was that name?

KARA: Jack Akihara.

KANEMOTO: Akihara.

KARA: They were close, too. And of course, I know Mary and Al. I don't know. Just all up and down the road. All of them were close, too.

KANEMOTO: Some of the families have left the town. But I see that you are still in touch with many that left the Florin community.

KARA: Yes, because I worked on our high school homecoming. So I was in contact with them.

KANEMOTO: So you were very active as a student? With the student body?

KARA: No, not as a student. Just the homecoming, those that graduated. Every time each year at homecoming for everybody. Of course, I was always active in the Rebekahs and everything, in the Native Daughters and the Eastern Star, too.

KANEMOTO: I noticed that in your collection you have several mementoes, and you held several offices. And I'm sure if you go up to president you have to work your way up. So in between you have really served your time.

KARA: My daughter is the past president now. She'd served a couple of years of her own. The other daughters in the family

were all state officers, too. That's the way to keep kids out of trouble. Keep them busy.

KANEMOTO: You don't have enough of that now. With the parents busy, they use that as an excuse. It is a concern isn't it?

Your husband passed away in 1981.

KARA: That's ten years ago.

KANEMOTO: So he was primarily with the vineyards. He continued his father's work. Can you give us an idea by the street landmarks the extent of the land holdings you had?

KARA: Basically, we lived on this place here.

KANEMOTO: He was here before the war, then. The big war.

KARA: Oh yes, when they were kids. They grew up here. I grew up over on Gerber Road. After we got married, we lived in Florin a little while, then we went to Walsh Station, then we went up to the store. We lived behind the store.

KANEMOTO: What was the store name?

KARA: Kara's. Kara's Drygoods. General merchandise. We had clothes, food, gifts, groceries, meats, and everything. Just a general merchandise. Everyone was around close.

KANEMOTO: It's not like going downtown. Florin Mall is still the closest, isn't it?

KARA: We didn't have a favorite. All we had was Stockton Boulevard and Gerber Road when I was a kid. It used to fill up with water in the wintertime. Some times the horses had to swim. A lot of changes.

KANEMOTO: Would you consider it one of the better changes?

KARA: Well, they say it's progress, but I don't think it's progress when you can't even get out on the road sometimes.

KANEMOTO: But then it's a little too much. After Stockton it gets a little slower, but beyond that, westward, it's very full.

KARA: More people coming in. And some of these don't even know how to drive. Different nationalities. I wouldn't give it up for the world.

KANEMOTO: Right. I'm sure you feel very secure close to your daughters, now. And your relative isn't too far. It's nice when you are next door when you still have the independence. And you've proven to yourself and others, that at seventy years, you can really manage a household and still get on do your chores. So have you enjoyed good health? You mentioned about your kidneys. . .

KARA: Yes, I've had good health all my life.

KANEMOTO: It was only last year that you had to have it removed?

KARA: Yes, one. I've never been in the hospital. Only to have the children. We're a very fortunate family, both daughters, and the grandchildren, and the great grandchildren always have been real close.

KANEMOTO: In other words, the ideal isn't it?

KARA: Keep them interested and they don't get into trouble.

KANEMOTO: Can you tell me a little bit about your hobbies? I know you are a very busy lady. Collecting antiques. Can you tell me about some of the items that you have in your house which is very personalized? Something that your family

has treasured all your life? The lamp that you have there?

KARA: I bought that in Carson City. Kerosene.

KANEMOTO: You electrified that.

KARA: Yes. Things from different people.

KANEMOTO: It is really precious to you.

KARA: Yes, I like it.

KANEMOTO: Your home is like a museum. Here's an interesting telephone, crank telephone.

KARA: That's a music box.

KANEMOTO: A music box made into a . . .

KARA: Radio.

KANEMOTO: A radio. I see. And you showed me the butter churner with which you made butter between your legs. (Laughter) People won't appreciate it. Is that a coffee grinder?

KARA: No, it's a clock.

KANEMOTO: It's a clock. But then it was what?

KARA: That came on the stove. You can set it, and it'll come on at a certain time, and go off at a certain time.

KANEMOTO: Isn't that interesting. They definitely show that they go back to the early 1900's.

You mentioned all your clubs didn't you?

KARA: All the lodges. If people would realize what you get when you get older out of the friendships with people, then more people would join lodges and things instead of sitting at home watching television. You know, the friendship and activities, and doing good. We do all kinds of heart and

arthritis and all these things. We save stamps for the eyes, cancelled stamps, and all of these things. They're doing good for someone else. I just got one a while ago that she sent me cancelled stamps. This is down from Canoga Park. I just received that in the mail a while ago.

KANEMOTO: Now what do you do with the stamps?

KARA: We send them in to a place. They take them and it's the dye. You can't get that dye anywhere. They put it on stamps they make in Washington, D.C. So they get this dye out to help people's pupils, eyes and everything.

KANEMOTO: Who was this done for? Is it the Lion's or some organization?

KARA: No, the Rebekahs. That's who I was saving for. Everybody sends them. I always put on my Christmas cards, "Don't forget your cancelled stamps all year long."

KANEMOTO: So you give them a constant annual reminder.

KARA: We save newspapers, too.

KANEMOTO: Yes, it's about time we're recycling things.

KARA: Yes, There're a lot of things we recycle lately. A lot of things.

KANEMOTO: You finished high school at the Elk Grove High School?

KARA: Yes. All our family--my uncle, brother, children, the grandchildren, too, went to Elk Grove. The other schools were just being built when they went to Elk Grove High.

KANEMOTO: Have you read about the changes and how. . .

KARA: I don't worry about them.

KANEMOTO: But they are really bursting at the seams.

KARA: How many schools do they have to put up?

KANEMOTO: Without too much planning it's just gone a little. . .

KARA: Look at the little town of Sheldon out there. Eighty five hundred homes are in there. Say four people to each home, you'd never get out in the road.

KANEMOTO: Let's see. Being that you have had several Japanese friends, did you ever travel to Japan at all?

KARA: No.

KANEMOTO: Oh, what a shame.

KARA: I was going to go with Mary and Al when they went over there. It just came up at the wrong time. I've been to Hawaii six times. But I have never gone to Japan. They say there are those that went to school with us that live over there now.

KANEMOTO: Well, looking at you, I feel you're still capable. I hope you don't put a closure on that. So do you attend some of our functions?

KARA: Yes, they always send me notices.

KANEMOTO: You don't find the food offensive?

I wonder if we covered enough of the time when the Japanese left for camp, and you must have been, shall I say stuck, or left with the responsibility of all the strawberries and grapes. . .

KARA: Everybody left.

KANEMOTO: . . .that were actually ripe and ready to be picked. It

just kinda sounds like they were in a panic, and for you to take care of your own plus all these other Japanese farmers.

KARA: Yes, they had to leave their things there, and we stored them like in a room in their house, some of their furniture. We helped them out.

KANEMOTO: I have heard that you did. Do you have any feelings about, as you probably know, all the Japanese are, by order of age, they are being reimbursed twenty thousand. . .

(End Tape 1, Side 1)

(Begin Tape 1, Side 2)

KANEMOTO: For the four years that they were in camp and by losing a lot of their personal property, I know the people who were in touch with you, found everything okay. But for many of them, the houses were burnt.

KARA: Yes. Some of them.

KANEMOTO: Do you have any feelings about the redress? That's what they call it, you know the twenty thousand for each individual.

KARA: No. I don't have any trouble about it.

KANEMOTO: Some people really did lose. Of course, you are talking about an amount that's not paying for everything. That's really a token amount.

KARA: Are the people really getting their money?

KANEMOTO: They paid the people that are sixty two years old now. They divided it up into three year periods.

KARA: What happens to those that are deceased? Does it go to their family?

KANEMOTO: In 1988, when President Reagan signed the paper, then if they were deceased, then the family will get it. But, otherwise, no. There are a lot of stipulations, exceptions to the rule. But simply put, that's how it is. Unfortunately, it took too long. Fifty years. So people of your age group, if they didn't live long, what would you do when you're ninety years old? The twenty thousand won't give you any time to enjoy it or anything. So it's really a gesture, more than any thing else. I'm glad that you don't feel they don't deserve it.

KARA: I like Matsui. I think he's a nice man. He was at the funeral the other night. He came over and shook hands with me. Because he was here by Perkins, I think he was raised on Jackson Road. I think he is very efficient and qualified. He can really talk, too.

KANEMOTO: Did he eulogize? He made a speech?

KARA: Oh, he did get up and say something about Henry in a eulogy.

KANEMOTO: There are many capable people now, because they have had the opportunity to go to school, to finish school. But when World War II came, many of them did not have that opportunity. They were just getting to the marrying age. You see, Mary's age is among the older ones. The younger ones have had the opportunity to finish. . .

KARA: Their daughter is going to town.

KANEMOTO: It's really nice. They also have a . . .

KARA: A beautiful home.

KANEMOTO: Right. They certainly deserve it don't they? It's been a long time. So all I can say is, I hope they live long to enjoy it.

KARA: Al hasn't been too well lately. He had a stroke. And Bill Okamoto, he's had several strokes.

KANEMOTO: You said you didn't have any hobbies? Let's see, when I made my calls you mentioned that you were working for the fair.

KARA: I worked fifteen years, twelve years, I guess, for the State Fair for Mendocino County. . . .

KANEMOTO: Why Mendocino?

KARA: They wanted help. I started at the old fairgrounds. Each year they'd call me back. Then I worked at the Odd Fellows Building at Ninth and K, that big building. I managed that for fifteen years, after we were out of the store.

KANEMOTO: What do you do at the Fair? Is it to do the displays or to contact people?

KARA: You kept care of the Mendocino County, all their displays and everything. You keep it up. And if people want information, you tell them about this county.

KANEMOTO: So you were involved at the Sacramento State Fair?

KARA: Yes, California State Fair. I started at the old fairgrounds and went to the new one.

KANEMOTO: Oh, that was a big project then. You went beyond the

Sacramento County. So you were invited to help at the Mendocino.

KARA: No, not at Mendocino County. Just the State Fair. It has all the counties at the State Fair. They're supposed to have displays.

KANEMOTO: Oh, I see. So you would do the display here, locally.

KARA: I worked at the Oddfellows Building for fifteen years.

KANEMOTO: Can you tell me a little more about your husband Jerry?

KARA: Like what? (Laughter)

KANEMOTO: He was a good man, and I know he worked very hard. He had to be a really good man to be able to reach out and help the community people.

KARA: I loved him very much and missed him terribly. We worked in the store together and some people would say, "I don't see how you can work all day with your husband and be happy." Well we'd always make a joke about it. We'd laugh about different things. . .

KANEMOTO: You had a lot of humor, kidding each other at times. What kind of things was he active in?

KARA: He belonged to Oddfellows, too. And he liked ranching, he liked the tractor.

KANEMOTO: So he was actually out there himself, not just the big boss. He worked side by side with his employees. Do you recall how many people you might have had on the payroll?

KARA: No. See some of the Filipinos came in and helped Jerry do the crops. They picked them. They stayed together.

And they would come back every year. The ones we had, the same ones came back each year.

KANEMOTO: That means you treated them right.

KARA: They were good. They had a boss. Like a woman out there packing the grapes all day. We never had comments or anything. The boss made sure that. . .

KANEMOTO: He had his reputation for the next year. Well that's good. Kinda had a pecking order.

Do you have any advice for the coming generation?

How to live successfully?

KARA: I think that the head of the house should be able to make enough that the family can live right and keep one member of the family at home to raise the children, instead of letting the children run around as they are now. Guide your children in what's right or wrong.

KANEMOTO: That's your main concern.

KARA: Oh, I think it's terrible that mothers and fathers don't know what's going on and what their kids are getting in to. I think it's terrible and I always did. I know my two girls did it with their families. The meals at night, why they sat around and discussed what happened during the day. There wasn't sitting in front of a television. They wouldn't allow it. And you can keep up with the kids. And you belonged to 4-H and all these activities. You keep the kids busy and they stay out of trouble. The Little Leagues and all of those things, they have so many different

things to keep the kids busy. I think it's terrible the way they are going.

KANEMOTO: In other words, you never had any flack from your two daughters?

KARA: Oh, no, and their children either. We kept them busy.

KANEMOTO: You role-modeled it and they were happy with. . .

KARA: Yes, my girls belonged to Theta Rho; they belonged to Job's Daughters; they belonged to 4-H; they took music lessons and everything. We never let them run around. All their friends could come. We had a swimming pool. All their friends could come and weren't getting into trouble. They wish for trouble now, that's what I think. Look at yesterday. They just come in and shoot. They carry a knife and they carry a gun. . . I think they should be frisked and if they have one, take it away from them. They should have these detectors. They've got all this stuff.

KANEMOTO: While working in the schools, if the family fails, the school tries to take over. It's almost impossible for the school to take over. It's there for education.

KARA: Parents don't like it either. And they should appreciate somebody helping them.

KANEMOTO: But then, they fight the schools. It's a cooperative thing, isn't it? It's a community thing. It just goes on and on. But it has to start with the home.

KARA: That's right. Somebody should be at home at all times.

KANEMOTO: There are some things that are old fashioned that still sticks.

KARA: Look at the way they eat. They have a can of pop and hamburger or something.

KANEMOTO: Thank you Vivian for this very informative meeting. I really wish we could explain your home a little bit more, because it is a very rich, warm home, and I hope you enjoy it for a long time. And thank you for your history.

KARA: Well thank you. And I appreciate you coming over and visiting with you, too.

(End Tape 1, Side 2)

3
Witness our hands and seals this Nineteenth day of

February 1884.

Signed, Sealed and Delivered in the presence of

David Reese

Mira L. Reese



State of California,)
COUNTY OF Sacramento)
ss.

On this 26th day of February, in the year one thousand eight hundred and eighty-four, before me, L S Taylor
a Notary Public in and for said County, residing therein, duly commissioned and sworn,
personally appeared David Reese and Mira L.
Reese his wife

known to me to be the person described in and whose names are subscribed to the within instrument, and acknowledged to me that they executed the same.

Also, on this 26th day of February, A. D. 1884, before me,
L S Taylor, a Notary Public in and for said County,
residing therein, duly commissioned and sworn, personally appeared Mira L.
Reese, wife of the said David Reese,
known to me to be the person whose name is subscribed to the within instrument, described
as a married woman: and upon an examination, without the hearing of her husband, I
made her acquainted with the contents of the Instrument, and thereupon she acknowledged
to me that she executed the same, and that she does not wish to retract such execution.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed
my official Seal, the day and year last above written.

L S Taylor

Notary Public.

For and in Consideration

of the sum of Five Hundred Dollars.
to us in hand paid Mr Daniel Reese and Myra
L Reese, his wife of Sacramento County
State of California

Do hereby Grant, bargain and sell unto Robert S. Patch
and of the same place.

All that Real Property situated in the said County of Sacramento,
and State of California, bounded and described as follows:-

Commencing at the North East $\{NE\}$ corner of
the South West $\{SW\}$ Quarter of Section No
Two $\{2\}$, in Township No seven $\{7\}$ North
Range One $\{5\}$ east Mt Diablo Base and
Meridian, and running thence south on the
quarter section line Forty Two $\frac{1}{3}$. $\{42\frac{1}{3}\}$ Rods.
Thence West at right angles Seventy five $\{75\}$
Rods, Thence at right angles North Forty $\frac{1}{3}$
 $\{42\frac{1}{3}\}$ Rods. Thence East Seventy Five
 $\{75\}$ Rods to the place of beginning - Contain
ing 20 acres, Reserving for a private
Road, a strip Twenty feet wide on the
North side of said Street of land the whole
length thereof

Deed.

David Reese +
wife

—TO—

Robert S. Pitchard,

Dated 188

Recorded at the Request of

Robert S. Pitchard
June 12th A. D. 1886,
at 5 minutes past 10
A. M., in Book 117
of Deeds, page 375 facts
Co Rec or Wm Miller
Recorder.

By Deputy Recorder.

RIPON WINS TYPING TEST

Sacramento Girl Captures The
Bee Cup Third Time
For Local School

SUTTER CREEK (Amador Co.), May 5.—The sixth annual Mother Bee Typing Contest was held in Sutter Creek Saturday, May 3rd. Sixty-three contestants participated in spite of the inclemency of the weather.

The Ripon High School won first place, a second and a third place. Elk Grove and Sacramento tied for second place.

The Sacramento Bee trophy for accuracy was permanently won for Sacramento by Bernice Lane, this being three wins. The winners were as follows: 1925, Elk Grove; 1926, Elk Grove; 1927, Sacramento; 1928, Sacramento; 1929, Marysville; 1930, Sacramento.

The awards were as follows:
Unlimited Speed—Miriam Stahlberg, Stockton, Trophy.
First, Lucile Huchings, Marysville, 73 net words, 15 errors; second, Grace Duffy, Sacramento, 69 net words, 8 errors; third, Hedwig Nagele, Marysville, 63 net words, 10 errors.

Unlimited Accuracy—Sutter Creek Lions Club Trophy.

First, Ernest Yee, Marysville, 61 net words, 4 errors, 95.8 per cent; second, Grace Duffy, Sacramento, 66 net words, 8 errors, 92.5 per cent; third, Ethel Britt, Sacramento, 60 net words, 9 errors, 90.8 per cent.

Second Year Speed—Sacramento Bee Trophy. Retired. Permanently won for the third time by Sacramento.

First, Bernice Lane, Sacramento, 59 net words, 32 errors; second, Miriam Stahlberg, Ripon, 59 net words, 24 errors; third, Helen Foster, Sutter Creek, 57 net words, 11 errors.

Second Year Accuracy—Sutter Creek Union High School Board of Trustees' Trophy.

First, Lois Vance, Ripon, 53 net words, 3 errors, 96.38 per cent; second, Vivian Venn, Elk Grove, 50 net words, 2 errors, 97.4 per cent; third, Olive Scappuzzi, Jackson, 56 net words, 5 errors, 94.42 per cent.

First Year Speed—Stockton Chamber of Commerce Trophy.

First, Phyllis Brown, Ripon, 73 net words, 6 errors; second, Mary Johnson, Elk Grove, 53 net words, 3 errors; third, Ruby McKenzie, Sutter Creek, 50 net words, 8 errors.